



A Return To Normalcy?

—By Robert KA5WSS

No, we're not there yet. But off in the distance I can see some hope of a return to normalcy. Vaccination rates continue to rise. There are now three vaccines to throw at the enemy. Hospitalizations have fallen a lot.

But right now, and for the next few months at least, large gatherings are still not a great idea. We all miss seeing each other in person and look forward to normal monthly meetings. Our Zoom meetings have gone well, I think. In person meetings MIGHT be possible later this year. Your club officers will keep an eye on the science and make the proper choice as conditions change.

One thing we have done is schedule the 2021 Sonoma Hamfest. Unlike the normal routine of an April date at the Veterans Center this year the event will take place on October 2nd at the Congregational Church on Spain Street. Thanks to Darrel (WD6BOR) for arranging this at no cost to the club.

The [ARRL's Field Day 2021](#) will encourage social distancing once again (see more details below). But it seems certain things will return to normal in 2022.

Other VOMARC activities have continued unabated. The [weekly and bi-weekly breakfast](#)

[nets](#) on 2M are immune to viruses and have served as important gathering spots for club members and guests.

It's early but there are signs of progress. Normalcy is on its way. Until then, let's continue to do our part and limit the spread of COVID-19. Get your shot(s) when you're able and let's try to put this horrible historic event behind us. Let's get back to not only playing on the radio from a distance but also connecting with local friends.

NEXT MEETING

Wed, February 17, 2021, 7:30pm

Zoom meeting room info will be emailed later.

Topic: MESH Network plans for the East Bay Section

Presenter: Mathison Ott (KJ6DZB)

Minutes of the February 17 Meeting

Meeting was held together on ZOOM by KA5WSS

KA5WSS (Robert), KD6FIL (Dave), KG6QNT (Eileen), KI6DHG (Rachel), WD6BOR (Darrel), KE6HID (Andrew), KB6CLV (Simon), W6HRY (Terry), KM6ZUC (Bruce), W8EWL (John), N7PIB (Sanford), N6LY (Elizabeth), K6YD (Kevin), NJ6E

(Stan), N6TVN (Carl), WB6TMH (Mike), KH6GJV (Bill), KF6FZM (Dick)

Guest: W6NIR (Rick), K6ZGN (Richard)

Meeting called to order at 19:30 by KA5WSS

MINUTES

Minutes from the January meeting accepted as written.

News Letter Editor

No updates.

VE Liaison

VE Session was held on January 30th. There were 5 candidates and all passed their technician license. 2 candidates went on to pass their general license. Go to the VOMARC webpage for more information.

<http://vomarc.org/licensing.html> . AA6RH is now a VE.

TREASURER

Currently have \$4,945 in the bank. VOMARC set it up to pay dues online.

Still have not purchased a printer.

SECRETARY

No Updates. The VOMARC Breakfast on the Air is going well.

Light Houses on the Air is scheduled for August 21 & 22. The Point Reyes Ranger Station has contacted the club if we are planning to activate the Point Reyes Lighthouse for the event this year.

TRUSTEE

No updates.

PRESIDENT

Working on a welcome packet for new hams. It would include a welcome letter, band plan, local repeater list and membership application. For hams that pass the license exam at a VOMARC VE session they are given a VOMARC membership for the first year and the additional

information would help them get on the air. Is there anything else we should include?

KB6CLV suggested an elmer contact list.

Congratulations to N6TVN for the Cal QSO Party QRP award.

OLD BUSINESS

VOMARC Hamfest – we have been granted the use of the Congregational Church on October 2 for the hamfest thanks to WD6BOR's efforts.

More details to follow.

The Sonoma County DMR net is still going at 1830 on Thursdays on talk group 31707.

Mystery Box: Jack, K6ZMF has the box and the Mystery Box program is on hold for a while

Next Month's Program: Mesh Network Plans for the East Bay.

PROGRAM: Early Telegraph presented by W6NIR, Rick Ferranti

Meeting adjourned at 2100ish.

—Submitted by Dave KD6FIL

Field Day 2021

Still a few months away but the ARRL has announced changes to the 2021 edition of Field Day that we should all keep in mind as we get closer to June.

If you recall, due to COVID-19, last year's event strongly encouraged social distancing by temporarily changing the scoring system for club stations. Instead of gathering in a central location, club members would operate from their home stations and scores would be added up for a final tally.

The change proved to be quite popular and with vaccinations not perhaps reaching the critical point by June the ARRL has extended those rule changes for 2021. Last year eight VOMARC members officially submitted logs. We can do better this time, particularly if we organize a

mini VOMARC QSO Party on 2M during the event.

More details to be worked out in the months ahead, but there's no time like now to get your station in working order.



—Submitted by Robert KA5WSS

Who's Doing What

Sanford (N7PIB) has worked 989 parks in the Parks on the Air program. Worked his last needed prefecture in Japan, JS6TWW in Okinawa, which was also on a remote island that counts as a separate IOTA entity. He also worked French Polynesia (FO) on 80M.

Carl (N6TVN) worked several of the K4 special event stations for Hamcation. He also made 267 CW QSOs during the CA QSO Party, which was good enough to set a new SO QRP record for Sonoma county. https://cqp.org/results/2020/2020_CA.pdf. He made 35 QSOs CQ WW WPX and spent much of the time looking for new DXCC entities.

Robert (KA5WSS) surpassed 300 unique prefixes worked on 17M to earn another WPX Mixed award endorsement.

—Submitted by Robert KA5WSS

Morse Code

For some reason, Google decided I wanted to hear more about Morse Code than normal. Is it trying to tell me something?

I got several articles in my feeds about the [175th anniversary of the first Morse Code transmission](#). The problem is that the 175th Anniversary was a couple of years ago. The first long distance transmission (between Washington, DC and Baltimore via cable) took place on May 24th, 1844. The article highlights the many ways code has been used over the years, from ship communications to aviation and even sending messages as a prisoner of war.

On a recent Breakfast Net Carl (N6TVN) mentioned the [K1USN slow speed contest](#) on Sunday evenings. The hour long event provides an opportunity for slower speed operators to work on their code without much pressure.

Anyone else notice the Amazon Pay logo that includes a bit of Morse Code?



Is Morse Code dangerous? No. However, [hackers have recently utilized Morse Code as cover for malicious scripts designed to steal login credentials](#). The script code, which would normally be detected by software, was represented as dots and dashes and decoded on the fly as needed.

—Submitted by Robert KA5WSS

Misc

- Frank (KG6N) is looking for other operators interested in participating in the Lighthouses on the Air event August 21-22 at Point Reyes.
- Dean Knight (KI6FFM) reported that [HamSCI is forming a planet-sized space weather sensor network](#) and we can all participate!
- Long a source of parts, [Fry's Electronics has gone out of business](#).

- The US Navy is investigating [3D printed antennas](#). Some [Amateur Radio operators are doing something similar](#).
- Israeli Amateurs [lose spectrum and power levels in the microwave bands](#). Another country killing off the 3.5 GHz band altogether. The 23cm band shaved to a fraction of its former size. Use it or lose it folks!
- Amazon will soon [require a statement of FCC certification for radio devices sold on their platform](#).
- Someone forgot to turn off a low power AM transmitter that [continuously sent the same road closure report for 8 years](#).

—Submitted by Robert KA5WSS

QSL Card Inbox



The Caribbean isn't always the easiest for me from my home station. But I managed to work HI8S in the Dominican Republic on FT8.



I've worked UA0ZC in Asiatic Russia on both the FT4 and FT8 digital modes.



Despite the long distance, and a very modest home station, I was able to make contact with VP8LP in the Falkland Islands using FT8.



I made this 10M CW contact 30 years ago. Revillagigedo is a group of remote islands far enough away from Mexico to count as a separate DXCC entity. Thankfully my very late QSL card request was met with success.

—Submitted by Robert KA5WSS

THE VOMARC WIRELESS

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Frank C. Jones – W6AJF

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"Receipt of the Wireless is one of the most sought after benefits of membership in VOMARC."—S. Marler

WEB PAGE: <http://www.vomarc.org/>

Nets are held every Wednesday night at 19:30 (7:30 P.M.) local, except meeting nights on the 145.350 repeater, -600 kHz, PL 88.5 Hz.

Breakfast Nets are held every Tuesday and Saturday morning at 7:30 AM on the 146.205, +600, PL 88.5 Hz repeater.

Comments and submissions of material may be sent to:

Eileen@vom.com

—OR—

Valley of the Moon ARC, Inc.

C/O Sonoma Police Department

175 First Street West

Sonoma, CA 95476

2021 ACS Net Control Assignments

	Name	Call
JANUARY	MOE	KI6JNU
FEBRUARY	SCOTT	KJ6QIQ
MARCH	SCOTT	KJ6QIQ
APRIL	JIM	K6UUW
MAY	DICK	KF6FZM
JUNE	MOE	KI6JNU
JULY		
AUGUST	BILL	KJ6EIG
SEPTEMBER	SAM	W5LTP
OCTOBER	DICK	FK6FZM
NOVEMBER	MIKE	WB6TMH
DECEMBER	DARREL	WD6BOR

2021 VOMARC Net Control Assignments

	Name	Call
JANUARY	ROBERT	KA5WSS
FEBRUARY	DARREL	WD6BOR
MARCH	MOE	KI6JNU
APRIL	DAVE	KD6FIL
MAY	ED	W1EJ
JUNE	FRANK	KG6N
JULY	ED	W1EJ
AUGUST	CARL	N6TVN
SEPTEMBER	SAM	W5LTP
OCTOBER	DICK	KF6FZM
NOVEMBER	MIKE	WB6TMH
DECEMBER	DARREL	WD6BOR

VOMARC MEMBERSHIP 2021

Membership Dues: \$15/year individual; \$5/year family member at same address.

VOMARC encourages its members to join the ARRL. More information is available at www.arrl.org.

QST is available to blind and physically handicapped individuals on audio cassette from the Library of Congress, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. Call 1-800-424-8567.

Name: _____ CALL: _____ EMAIL: _____

Address: _____ APT: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Name: _____ CALL: _____ EMAIL: _____

Name: _____ CALL: _____ EMAIL: _____

VOMARC Membership: Complimentary with Class—Date: _____

Membership Moment, From the Database Queen:

Dues may be mailed to VOMARC in care of the Sonoma Police Department, 175 1st St West, CA 95476, or brought to the next meeting. Your check should be made payable to: **VOMARC**.